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Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
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->From the Editor's Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"
"""""""""""""""""""""""""""""

What a great week! Certainly a turnaround from the week before! You can still tell that it's August in New England, but at least the weather isn't as oppressively hot at the moment. It's hard to believe that Labor Day is almost upon us! At least most of my summer tasks have been completed and I can enjoy the fruits (or vegetables) of my labor. I still have half of that mountain of loam to finish laying out. Gee, I need a machete to cut down the growth of weeds that's taken it over! The new shed needs to be stained, but that shouldn't be too bad a task. It's almost time to close the pool, but we're having a new cover fitted to alleviate that task in the future. My last summer fling vacation in a couple of weeks should take care of everything and still leave plenty of time for relaxation!

You're going to enjoy Joe's editorial comments this week. I have to restrain myself from adding to it here because I don't want to spoil it. However, I must say that Joe's comments struck a chord! And, I will have something to add after his comments!

As the summer winds down, the news maintains a similar low peak. Vacations take over, and rightfully so. Things will start to ramp back up after the holiday and we'll do the same here at A-ONE. So, sit back and put your feet up, and enjoy another cold one!

Until next time...

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A New Release of XaAES

Done:

1 - XaAES now runs with MiNT memory protection enabled.
Many fixes to prevent access to the memory of a killed client.
2 - Fixed a bug in half_screen calculation. Too much memory was allocated.
3 - WM_ONTOP & WM_UNTOPPED was not always sent when needed. Fixed.
Menu bar, focus and top window switching now much better.
4 - After exiting a app the correct desktop is displayed.

5 - It is now possible to leave the file selector with a path only.
6 - Used the excellent program of Joakim Högberg to finally get all the 3d drawing correct.
7 - Fixed a interference of slider move events with other clients events. Sliders behave exact again, no running behind.
8 - Fix in objc_add: ob_head and ob_tail of the new object are initialized to -1.
9 - Rsrc_load and shell_find now use a path set by the client.
10 - First benefit of memory protection.
Could fix a obscure bug in the menu handler that caused bombing when MP was enabled.

Memory protection was enough reason to jump the version number.
A small step for mankind, a huge step for XaAES. ;-)

Read the history file!!

--
Groeten; Regards.
Henk Robbers
http://xaaes.atari.org

VINTAGE COMPUTER FESTIVAL 5.0

Vintage Computer Festival 5.0
September 15th and 16th, 2001
Parkside Hall - San Jose Convention Center
San Jose, California
http://www.vintage.org/2001/main/

Mark your calendar! The fifth annual Vintage Computer Festival is scheduled for the weekend of September 15th and 16th at Parkside Hall in San Jose, California.

The Vintage Computer Festival is a celebration of computers and their history. The event features speakers, a vintage computer exhibition, and a vintage computer marketplace. We showcase all different types of computers for all different kinds of platforms in all different shapes and sizes.

EXHIBIT YOUR VINTAGE COMPUTER

Vintage Computer Collectors: we want you! Exhibit your favorite computer in the Vintage Computer Exhibition. First, Second and Third place prizes will be awarded in 13 categories, including the coveted Best of Show.

For complete details on the VCF 5.0 Exhibition, visit:

http://www.vintage.org/2001/main/exhibit.php

BUY/SELL/TRADE AT THE VINTAGE COMPUTER MARKETPLACE

Do you have some vintage computer items you’d like to sell? Whether

you rent a booth or sell on consignment, the Vintage Computer Festival Marketplace is the premier venue for selling old computers and related items. If you would like to rent a booth or inquire about consignment rates, please send e-mail to <vendor@vintage.org> for more information or visit:

http://www.vintage.org/2001/main/vendor.php

TELL A FRIEND! TELL A FRIEND! TELL A FRIEND!

We really hope to see you at the VCF 5.0! And remember, tell your friends!!

A printable flyer in Word format can be downloaded here:

    http://www.vintage.org/2001/main/vcf50.doc

Vintage Computer Festival 5.0
September 15th and 16th, 2001
Parkside Hall - San Jose Convention Center
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http://www.vintage.org/2001/main/

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING

compiled by Joe Mirando
joe@atarinews.org

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. I've been sick for the past couple of days (stomach bug), so I'm going to keep this short.

I've been thinking a lot lately about prejudice. I was just a kid at the end of the 60's but a lot of the stuff that was going on made a huge impression on me.

I think I was at just the right age for what was going on... old enough to realize that these hippies, yippies, panthers, and what-ever-else weren't 'normal', but young enough to realize that it didn't matter.... that we're all different... and that's the way it should be.

Let's face it. It'd be just plain foolish to think that we were all the same. We're all different. And that's a good thing.

So, for the past thirty-plus years, I've conscientiously and studiously worked to rid myself of any prejudice. Race? Creed? Color? They're all irrelevant to me. "Do your own thing" has been my motto for a long, long time. As long as your "thing" doesn't keep someone else from doing theirs, I say "go for it".

But as hard as I try, there is one prejudice that I simply can't shake. For a long time, I didn't even realize that I had a prejudice. It just

seemed so natural and right to me that I never gave it a second thought. I guess that’s the way it is... you get so accustomed to thinking of something as unacceptable that you can’t see any other point of view.

But now, after a long hard look at myself, I’m afraid that I’ve got no other choice but to admit it... I am prejudiced against a particular group of people, and the really terrible part is that I don’t WANT to change.

So here it is....

I HATE STUPID PEOPLE!

I think they should all be neutered, sequestered in some out of the way place, and allowed to have as little interaction with the rest of us as possible! They just irritate me. I can’t stand the thought of the drain they put on society, the resources they consume without giving anything back, or the idea of my sister marrying one.

What really gets me going when one of "them" gets a little power and tries to further their cause.

Remember Dan Quayle? Right after he lambasted Murphy Brown for being a single mother, he began his crusade for "his people" by saying that they were tired of things being controlled by the "intellectual elite".

My first thought was, "sure, let’s have really stupid people run the country for a while and how it works out". They just don’t have a clue, do they? They have no idea of how things work, or what it takes to be a useful, contributing member of society.

Well, I guess I’ll just have to deal with it. Times are changing, and now there are stupid people everywhere you look. They’re gaining more and more acceptance, and it looks like I’m falling behind the times because I’m not jumping up and down to help them embrace their "stupidness".

I can live with that.

Okay, let’s get on with the news, hints, tips, and info available on the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup

Fredrik Egeberg asks about using his Nova card with an AfterBurner:

"I have a small plastic connector holding a colourful ribbon cable in place on my ab040 board, it goes from underneath the board and fits right between the 2 "connect thru" things for the expansion port. This prevents my Nova adaptor to fit 100%, it takes a lot of fiddling around to get it working once it slides out of place.

Does anybody know what this ribbon cable is for? Apparently it only exists on some boards, not all."

Jo Even Skarstein tells Fredrik:

"This cable is present on all Afterburners as far as I know. To avoid

conflict with the Nova (or any other expansion card), replace the connector on the AB with one angled 90 degrees. I've done this on my AB, and both my Nova and Eclipse fits without problems."

Fredrik tells Jo Even:

"Ok, I'll see if I can try to find a replacement. Its a pain in the bum really since I can't put my MKXcase back together without getting nova problems (which I assume comes from the adaptor not being in place)."

Jo Even replies:

"I bought some connectors from ELFA, it's standard 1/10" connectors which you cut to the length you need. I think one of these is what you need: http://www.elfa.se/elfa/produkter/se/14/146781.htm"

'Jonk' asks a simple, concise question:

"What is the biggest ide drive I can put in a Falcon?"

Dr. Uwe Seimet, author of HD Driver, tells Jonk:

"Currently the maximum IDE drive size is 128 GB (no typo: 128 GB)."

Peter West tells Uwe:

"Wow!!! But he did ask what is the largest he can use on a Falcon, which is 26 GB with MagiC and a CD-ROM (see my posting to the original enquirer)...

There is almost no limit to the *drive* size, but even with MagiC you can't have any partitions larger than 1 GB. And of course you are restricted by the number of partitions you can have, which depends on the OS. From Uwe's help-text for HDDRIVER (the best hard disk driver there is!):

```
 Partitioning Limits
        TOS 1.00-1.02: 256 MByte
        TOS 1.04-3.0x: 512 MByte
        TOS 4.0x:   1 GByte
     MagiC, MiNT: 1 GByte, 2 GByte if DOS compatible
     (Note: DOS compatible formats can only have 1 partition)

Number of Partitions:
     TOS: 14 (C:-P:)
     MagiC: 23 (C:-Z: except U:)
     MiNT: 29 (C:-Z: except U:, 1:-6:)
```

So with MagiC you could have 21 GB, with MiNT even 27 GB (two drives are reserved for floppies), or 1GB less if you are also using a CD-ROM.

Personally I have a 6.4 GB IBM fitted internally. This is a 3.5" drive with a suitable cable adapter from ASP. One snag with these large drives and partitions (mine are some 840 MB, except for C:) is that the cluster size is 32 kB, so every file will use at least that amount of space, even if it is only 1 byte long!"

Uwe tells Peter:

"You can use FAT32 partitions with MagiC which have virtually no size limit."

Peter gets interested and asks Uwe:

"Interesting! Tell me more please. How do you make FAT32 partitions and what does TOS make of them if it tries to read them? (I occasionally have to run without MagiC)."

Uwe replies:

"TOS will not see them because they have a non-standard partition ID of "F32" instead of "GEM" or "BGM". You can create FAT32 partitions with HDDRUTIL (->HDDRIVER) or with a Tool for MiNT. FAT32 partitions are what Windows9x uses for large partitions."

Paul Nurminen asks for help with Cubase:

"Ok, here we go...

Many of you will know that I've posted about Cubase Audio (CAF) in the past. Basically, I normally use it for just MIDI work, but I've been working on some projects that require _a lot_ of vocals, and CAF has been giving me a lot of trouble with random POPS and CLICKS in the recorded tracks, and I've been getting some conflicting bits of advice from people, so I thought I'd run it past everyone here, to get more input.

To start off, I'll tell you that I have a 14MB Falcon, that has had the "audio modifications" (for better CAF performance) done long ago, and it also has the Nemesis accelerator installed (that includes a "buffer board" that is apparently also supposed to help with CAF problems). The audio gets to the Falcon [through my TASCAM DAT machine] via the SoundPool/Steinberg FDI. And recently, I've also connected the JAM OUT PRO (rackmount - 8 outputs with 18-bit D/A converters) for a nice clean output signal. Also, I use a 4.29GIG Seagate "Barracuda" SCSI hard drive, with several completely empty partitions that are used fresh for each song.

My Falcon works great in all other areas, and with other digital audio applications that I have tried (QUiNCY, Studio Son, V-Trax, Audio Tracker). There are no noise problems with these programs. And my Falcon also works well under MagiC 5, and I've used both HD Driver 7.61, and ICD Por 6.5.5.

Now, onto the CAF problems:

* (1) *

Try as I might, I _cannot_ use HD Driver with CAF. Whenever I run CAF under HD Driver (I also run the little CAF_FIX.PRG too), here's what happens. I select a track to record audio on, name the file, click OK, then a short pause, and BOOOOOM, multiple bombs (like 7 or 8), and an immediate crash to the desktop. This happens 98 out of 100 times whenever I try to record audio. MIDI works ok though. I have no idea what this is all about, as everyone tells me they use HD Driver with CAF and never have problems - and I believe them. Uwe???

Well, since HD Driver is the driver I use when I'm doing _anything_ else on the Falcon, I've set up a floppy that I can boot from, that loads the ICD Pro drivers instead. When running CAF under ICD Pro, I don't get these crashes. But the random pops and clicks still appear.

* (2) *

Many of you, I would think, know Alex at ATY Computer in Oakland California, USA. Well, I consider him an expert with the Falcon and it's problems. I've dealt with him in the past, and in fact, he is the one who installed my Nemesis board a couple of years ago. He suggested that I should use the original Atari hard disk driver (AHDI v 6.05). He said he hasn't had noise problems when using that driver, that he DOES have under HD Driver or ICD Pro. I haven't tested it yet, but am planning to.

* (3) *

Despite the fact that I thought otherwise, based on what many people HERE have told me, Alex informed me that these noise problems are NOT related to the Falcon "clock/timing" fixes. He told me the following:

[from Alex at ATY Computer]:

"Your Falcon does not need any more "fixes". The buffer card portion (that little 1"x 3/4" circuit board that was installed underneath the keyboard in the middle section of the Falcon) of the Nemesis installation replaces all other CPU clock signal modifications. In fact it is the BEST modification to stabilize the Falcon"

"I have repaired several Falcons with stability problems by simply installing the buffer card portion of the Nemesis. The documentation that came with the Nemesis also mentioned that this buffer card fix is very stable"

* (4) *

Alex also mentioned a few other things to try, like using a different SCSI cable or drive (which I have), and also turning OFF the Falcon's internal fan. He had this to say about it:

[from Alex at ATY Computer]:

"It might sound strange but some Falcon fans actually can't keep a constant speed particularly after they have accumulated enough dust on them. The irregular spinning actually feeds back a clipped sine wave interference back onto the power supply which in turn causes slight delay in the voltage regulation timing. I was studying this problem with Atari way back in 1995 when one of my customers complained about a similar problem. I took the Falcon, SCSI hard drive, and Cubase Audio to the Atari service center in Sunnyvale. We setup the system and attached a scope to the 5 volt power line. By pressing down on the fan to simmilate the irregular spinning the sine wave changed and Cubase crashed while it was recording. We couldn't confidently conclude that a bad fan will always cause Cubase to malfunction

because we pulled an other Falcon out from the warehouse and tried the same test. The new Falcon didn't crash Cubase but this fan thing had always stuck in the back of my mind"

* (5) *

And finally, it was suggested to me by another Falcon/Nemesis/CAF user (Wayne Martz) that fragmentation will eventually cause noise problems, even if you start with a clean and completely empty partition. However, he told me that if, after hearing the noise, you quit CAF, and do a defrag on the partition, then restart CAF and reload the song (the drive now defragmented), the noise _won't_ be there. I haven't yet tested this myself yet, but it sounds promising.

Anyway, that's all I can think of at the moment, I welcome any and all replies! Let's figure this thing out already!"

Mike Freeman tells Paul:

"Very Interesting "article"! I'd love to see this on a web site somewhere. Maybe I'll do it! Anyway, here are my thoughts...

I've tried out HD Driver with CAF and have found the same as you. I don't know, maybe there's some setting we're missing, but I can only get CAF to reliably work using ICD Pro or AHDI.

Another idea... I normally use CBHD (which also seems to have problems with CAF), so I don't know if this works with HD Driver, but try using HD Driver as your normal driver, and use a program like Superboot, X-Boot, or whatever boot manager you like to run ICD Tools. Just set up a selection for "Audio" or whatever, and run ICD Tools from the AUTO folder, selected by the boot manager. This seems to work great for me.

I've never personally had these noises, so I can't suggest anything regarding the driver on this point, but I have heard that the brand or model of drive you use can cause similar problems.

I have Nemesis, and couldn't be happier (unless they made a modern CPU upgrade that worked with CAF... nice dream, huh? :)). Very stable, and CAF has no audio or stability problems to speak of.

Clayton Murray asks about emulators:

"I'm interested using an Atari emulator on a laptop PC. The main program I want to run is Pagestream. Does anyone have a recommendation of what emulator will run that program? I (obviously) haven't looked into this much yet. Is there a web page that gives the pros and cons of different emulators? At this point, I don't think I'll need midi capability, but I may in the future.

If it matters, the laptop is a Compaq Presario 1200-XL106 with an AMD K6-2 at 475mhz."

Greg George tells Clayton:

"I would recommend GEMulator as being the best non-game emulator. I use it with Pagestream 2 all the time.

http://www.emulators.com"

James Alexander adds:

"I think you can now get a version of pagestream that will run directly on that machine, check out the website, www.softlogik.com. it should be listed there."

Well folks, that's it for this time around. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - 'Formula One 2001'!
  """""""""""""""""""""""""""""""   Xbox Set For November 8!
                                     Dreamcast Sports Bundle!
                                     And more!

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News   - The Latest Gaming News!
  """""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""

Microsoft: Xbox on Track to Ship Nov. 8

Microsoft Corp. said on Tuesday its highly anticipated Xbox video game console, was on track to ship as scheduled in November, denying a report of design problems with a key component.

Brokerage Thomas Weisel Partners said in a research note earlier on Tuesday that construction on the Xbox video game console could be delayed up to four weeks because of a problem with an Intel Corp. motherboard. A Microsoft spokesman declined to comment on any specific Xbox production issues, but reaffirmed the planned Nov. 8 launch of the next-generation console. ''We can say there is absolutely no problem with the design of Intel's motherboard," Microsoft spokesman James Bernard said. ''They've been fantastic partners and delivered on everything to date."

Motherboards serve as a sort of internal chassis, holding the various components that power a video game console or personal computer.

With its blistering processors, hard drive and fast Internet connection, the Xbox will go head to head with the reigning video game champ, the PlayStation 2 from Sony Corp.

Microsoft is eager to avoid the kind of troubles Sony had for the U.S. launch of the PlayStation 2 last year, when parts shortages halved the number of units Sony had promised to deliver, thereby driving some consumers to buy rival systems.

‘‘We’re still marching toward our planned Nov. 8 launch for Xbox," Microsoft said in a statement.

Microsoft expects to ship between 600,000 and 800,000 of the consoles by launch and 1.5 million units by Dec. 31.

Weisel analyst Eric Ross, in a note Tuesday on NVidia Corp., said a design flaw in Intel’s motherboard for the XBox will delay production of the console three to four weeks. He did not elaborate as to how he knew except to say that "several sources maintain" there is a flaw. NVidia is supplying graphics chips for the console.

Ross could not be reached for further comment.

An Intel spokesman said the company did not comment on this type of report. Ross did say in the note the delay will not affect Microsoft’s projected Nov. 8 ship date for the console, since the production schedule for the unit is thought to be slack.

The console is being assembled by contract manufacturer Flextronics International Ltd. at plants in Europe and Mexico.

Published reports have pegged the value of that contract to Flextronics as $1 billion in 2002.

A spokesman for Flextronics also declined to comment on any possible production delays.

Beside Intel, other major manufacturers contributing parts to the XBox include Cirrus Logic Inc. and Micron Technology Inc.

Microsoft Updates Xbox Launch Plans for Canada

Microsoft Canada Co. announced updates to the Canadian launch plans for Microsoft Corporation’s highly anticipated Microsoft Xbox video game system. Starting Nov. 8, 2001, Xbox will be available for purchase at retail outlets across Canada at an estimated retail price of $459.99 Cdn. Microsoft Canada anticipates its launch library of 15 to 20 games will contribute significantly to building consumer excitement and driving sales of 1 to 1.5 million units across North America by the end of the holiday season.

Microsoft aims to spark widespread interest in Xbox titles with its diverse launch line-up across a variety of genres. Halo introduces gamers to an exciting new world where humans battle aliens on a mysterious ring-world with the objective of uncovering Halo’s horrible secrets and destroying mankind’s sworn enemy. In Oddworld: Munch’s Oddysee, players embark on an adventure using the special powers of two characters, Abe and Munch, to cooperatively make their way through the trials of Oddworld. Project Gotham Racing is a circuit-based racing game where players can compete against up to three friends in photo-realistic downtown environments. In Amped,

players experience freestyle riding down real mountain slopes with the goal of becoming one of the world’s snowboarding superstars.

"Xbox, the most powerful and easiest game platform to design for, allows game designers to finally realize their true creative visions for games," says Ryan Mugford, Marketing Lead - Xbox, Microsoft Canada Co. "The combination of power and creative talent means that on November 8th and beyond, Canadian consumers will experience a new level of game play."

Additional launch titles for Xbox include Dead or Alive 3 from Tecmo Ltd., an exclusive fighting title showcasing impressive new environments and characters from the popular series. Mad Dash Racing from Eidos Interactive, Inc. is an original title for Xbox combining high-speed combat racing and 3D adventure action in a thrilling scramble for the finish line. In NASCAR Heat from Infogrames Inc., players can experience the power of driving a 750 horsepower NASCAR Winston Cup car on their favorite racetrack.

"Microsoft is setting a new standard for video games with Xbox," said Kevin Layden, president and COO, Future Shop Ltd. "We expect Xbox to be one of the must-have items for the holiday season based on heavy consumer demand for cutting edge gaming technology."

"Xbox will have the most exciting games created by the industry’s best talent," adds Mugford who explains that more than 200 of the world’s top game artists and publishers have signed on to create Xbox games including powerhouse console game studios: Capcom Co. Ltd., Sega Entertainment Inc., Konami and Electronic Arts. These relationships further solidify Microsoft’s support from the world’s best game developers and will help to ensure that only the best video games will appear on Xbox.

"We are overwhelmed by the interest from our consumers who have been eagerly awaiting the launch of Xbox in Canada," says Jim Tyo, Electronic Boutiques’ recently appointed VP of Canadian Operations. "Microsoft will help drive growth in this competitive industry with Xbox. Its future-generation features and price point will offer gamers significant value. We are thrilled to be partners with Microsoft to launch this exciting new system into Canada."

Sega Introduces New Sports Bundle, Giving Consumers Another Reason to Score a Dreamcast

Sega Gives Consumers a Great Value by Bundling the Dreamcast Video Game Console With Three Hard Hitting Sega Sports 2K1 Titles For $99.95

Sega of America announced the ‘‘Sega Sports AEE Bundle 2K1," which includes the 128-bit Internet-ready Dreamcast video game console and three titles from the award winning Sega Sports AEE 2K1 line-up for $99.95. Included are three of Sega’s most highly acclaimed sports titles to date: ‘‘Sega Sports AEE NFL 2K1," ‘‘Sega Sports NBA 2K1" and ‘‘Sega Sports AEE World Series Baseball 2K1."

‘‘We are making the Dreamcast more affordable than ever so consumers can experience the thrill of playing Sega Sports games on or offline this summer," said John Golden, director of product marketing, Sega of America. ‘‘Sega Sports has a reputation for incredible content, so by combining games from the awesome Sega Sports 2K1 line-up with the Dreamcast makes the

Sega Sports Bundle 2K1 a terrific value for every sports video game fan."

‘‘Sega Sports NFL 2K1," ‘‘Sega Sports NBA 2K1" and ‘‘Sega Sports World Series Baseball 2K1" are three genre-breaking sports titles that feature over 1,300 motion-captured character animations, high-resolution detail and facial expressions, artificial intelligence that mirrors real life behavior, and accurate game and season statistics. From ‘‘bump and run" coverage in ‘‘NFL 2K1," a working spin move and crossover in ‘‘NBA 2K1" and true-to-life camera angles in ‘‘World Series Baseball 2K1," these games bring all the intricate action of the big leagues to gamers everywhere.

In addition to the Dreamcast and three games, the bundle also includes one standard Dreamcast controller, a stereo A/V cable, a 10-meter phone cable, an Internet browser CD-ROM and an instruction manual.

Sega also recently announced that both ‘‘Sega Sports NFL 2K1" and ‘‘Sega Sports NBA 2K1" have taken on ‘‘All Star 2K1" status and are available at retailers nationwide and on www.sega.com for $19.95.

The ‘‘Sega Sports Bundle 2K1" will be available in August at retailers nationwide and on www.sega.com for $99.95 while supplies last.

989 Sports’ Formula One 2001 Delivers Highly Sophisticated Exotic Racing Machines to Take Full Throttle Onto PlayStation2

The World’s Number One Motorsport Provides Gamers With Authentic F1 Racing Experience

Sony Computer Entertainment America (SCEA) Inc. announced the upcoming Fall 2001 release of the 989 Sports’ branded Formula One 2001, exclusively for the PlayStation2 computer entertainment system. Developed by Studio Liverpool, Formula One 2001 is an authentic racing simulation designed by racing fans for racing fans. Officially licensed by Formula One Administration Limited, Formula One 2001 includes all the race teams, 22 drivers and 17 Grand Prix tracks of the 2001 FIA Formula One World Championship.

To enhance the authenticity, Formula One 2001 allows players to choose between 11 different teams, including Ferrari, McLaren (Mercedes) and Williams (BMW). In addition, players have the opportunity to choose their favorite driver. In addition, Formula One 2001 puts you in the driver’s seat by providing the user with each driver’s unique attributes that simulate their real-life skills, whether it’s being aggressive, smooth, fast in the rain or efficient in managing tire wear and car preservation. Depending on the Grand Prix track selection, players also have the ability to fully customize their car for optimum performance.

‘‘Formula One 2001 features some of the most advanced automotive technology seen anywhere, creating an intoxicating blend of speed, power and exotic good looks," said Ami Blaire, director, product marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. ‘‘As the number one motorsport in the world today, we are pleased to bring this intense, sophisticated racing simulation to the PlayStation 2 as a part of the 989 sports brand."

For single players, Formula One 2001 offers Quick Race or Grand Prix modes that cater to both newcomers and experienced racers. In addition, players

have a choice of a Single Race, a full Race Weekend or the ability to participate in the entire World Championship. For intense competition between players, there is a 2-Player mode which allows friends to take on each other as well as the virtual true-to-life Formula One drivers. In addition, there is a Time Attack mode for up to 16 players. In this mode, one can instantly compare their lap times to that of up to 16 of their friends by taking turns to record the fastest lap on any of the 17 tracks provided.

Other key features for Formula One 2001 include:

-- Incredible, lifelike Driver Artificial Intelligence -- based on more than 30 different parameters compiled by F1 professionals; bringing the grid to life and introducing rivalry, aggression, experience and determination.
-- Customize the starting grid before each race to one's liking -- recreate famous grids from classic F1 races, or improve one's own starting position.
-- Fully customizable car setup -- the ability to tweak the suspension, change tire compound, add more front wing or change gear ratios and more.
-- Four different difficulty levels -- choices include, Novice, Amateur, Semi Pro and Pro skill level.
-- Real time weather conditions -- both wet and dry conditions that adds excitement and a new challenge to one's driving skills.
-- Bar raising level of detail -- full 17 man pit crews, waving flags and camera flashes in the grandstands, accurate individual driver cockpits and custom photo-realistic textures take Formula One 2001 to a new level.
-- Groundbreaking physics and dynamic models deliver one of the most accurate simulations of the most advanced motorsport in the world.

The independent Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) has not yet rated Formula One 2001.

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Court Rejects Delay of Microsoft Case

A federal appeals court on Friday rejected Microsoft Corp.'s bid to delay the antitrust case against the company, setting the stage for hearings as early as next month to determine what remedies will be imposed against the company.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia denied Microsoft's request that the case be delayed while the software giant appeals the case to the Supreme Court.

Barring any further hitch, the case will be sent back to a lower court next

Friday, where a new judge will be selected to decide what remedies should be imposed to prevent any further abuse of Microsoft's monopoly in personal computer operating systems.

The timing for moving the case could be crucial for Microsoft, which is due to roll out its new Windows XP operating system, packed with new features, in October.

The appeals court said Friday Microsoft had ''misconstrued" part of its June 28 opinion that upheld many of the findings of the lower trial court judge.

The company also, ''failed to demonstrate any substantial harm that would result from the reactivation of proceedings in the district court during the limited pendency of the (Supreme Court appeal)."

Legal analysts said the ruling clears the last major obstacle to getting the case for remedy hearings. The company could still ask the Supreme Court to stay the proceedings, but they said it was unlikely the high court would grant such a request.

Andy Strenio, a former U.S. Federal Trade Commissioner said the court dealt Microsoft a ''mild rebuke" by saying the company had ''misconstrued" its earlier ruling.

''This is sort of short and not sweet for Microsoft," Strenio said. ''It's a slight indication from the court that Microsoft's arguments were not well received."

Friday's ruling was a victory for the U.S. Justice Department and 18 states suing Microsoft, who have argued the case should proceed quickly so remedies can be imposed and competition assured in the software industry.

Some of the states backing the case have expressed concern that Windows XP represents a troubling repeat of Microsoft's integration of its Internet Explorer browser into Windows 98, integration that the appeals court agreed helped shore up the Windows monopoly.

''We are pleased with the court's decision and we look forward to proceedings in the District Court," said Justice Department spokeswoman Gina Talamona.

A spokesman for Microsoft said the company was ready to go forward with the case and was still open to a settlement with the government.

''While we believe the process was best served through a stay, we are prepared to move ahead with getting the remaining issues in the case resolved while we await word on Supreme Court review," Microsoft spokesman Jim Desler said. ''We remain committed to resolving the remaining issues in this case through settlement."

Microsoft had asked the Supreme Court to reverse an appeals court ruling the company abused its monopoly in personal computer operating systems, citing misconduct by the original lower-court judge.

The company charged the judge's rulings were compromised because he had given secret interviews to reporters before issuing them.

Had the appeals court granted Microsoft's request for a delay, the case would have gone on hold until October, when the Supreme Court is scheduled

to return from recess.

Strenio, now an antitrust lawyer at the firm Powell, Goldstein, Frazier & Murphy, said Microsoft could still appeal to the Supreme Court to stay the proceedings, but the high court would probably reject the idea.

After the case is sent back to the U.S. District Court next Friday, it will be randomly assigned to one of about a dozen judges there.

Strenio predicted it would be mid-September at the earliest before the remedy hearings actually began. First the new judge would have to set a timetable for the hearings and further legal filings by both sides.

’Big Brother’ Watching? In Britain, Quite Likely

Ever get the feeling someone is watching you? In Britain it is more likely to be true than anywhere else in Europe.

A government decision on Monday to broaden the network of roadside speed cameras to cut traffic accidents has raised fresh concerns among civil liberties groups that people’s privacy is being invaded far more than they might care to believe.

‘‘There are estimates of 1.5 to 2.5 million closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras in Britain, and I don’t believe any other country comes near that (per capita)," Roger Bingham, of civil rights pressure group Liberty, said.

Bingham said he did not have a major problem with more speed cameras, as long as they were visible and acted as a deterrent.

But it was another example of how technological advances have made snooping easier, from hidden cameras to mobile phones and the Internet, creating an Orwellian-like nightmare of ‘‘Big Brother is Watching You."

‘‘Technology has advanced so far over the last few years that areas where you would assume your privacy is intact is no longer the case. There is a wealth of means available to monitor and track you," Bingham said.

A spokesman for the parliament-appointed Information Commissioner agreed.

‘‘It is fair to say that within the United Kingdom there has been a growth in the use of CCTV systems by organizations and individuals," he said.

British police are increasingly using hidden cameras to crack down on suspected criminals such as hardline Real IRA activists and trawling the Internet to catch pedophiles.

Their powers were boosted by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act last year, under which people who refuse to reveal encryption codes to the police can be jailed for two years.

Britons were reminded of the prevalence of hidden cameras last week when footage was broadcast of a car shunting another one out of a parking space, resulting in a conviction for dangerous driving.

And the father of missing British student nurse Louise Kerton, 24, who

disappeared two weeks ago on her way home from Germany, has bemoaned the lack of security cameras in Europe, saying it reduced the chances of Louise being caught on film.

But Liberty says people are too complacent about their privacy, often assuming that cameras, Internet monitoring and mobile phone tracing are for the common good.

‘‘It is all about them knowing more about you than you about them. There should be active regulation and the collection of information only that is actually needed," Bingham said.

Those concerned at the state’s snooping powers can take heart, however. It emerged last week that speed cameras in Norfolk, East Anglia, have not had film in them for months.

’Web Bugs’ Are Tracking Use of Internet

Many people who have personal Web pages are unknowingly tracking people who visit and sending the information to third parties.

Many people who have personal Web pages are unknowingly tracking people who visit and sending the information to third parties, according to a new report. The report which will be released today by Cyveillance, which tracks Internet sites for corporate clients says that the use of an Internet monitoring technology popularly known as "Web bugs" has exploded on personal Web pages especially those created free through online companies like America Online and Geocities, a company owned by Yahoo. The monitoring technology, which can be used to gather information on visitors to a Web site, is invisibly added to the Web pages as part of elements that the sites offer to help create the Web page. America Online, for example, encourages users to place an advertisement offering a free trial membership; the company promises to pay users $50 for any new America Online member who signs up for the service by clicking on the ad. When users place the AOL ad on their pages, they also get a Web bug that passes information along to Be Free Inc., an Internet market research and advertising company.

The Web bug technology, which is also known by such terms as "clear gifs" and "Web beacons," now appears on 18 percent of personal pages, compared with less than 4 percent of pages over all and 16 percent of home pages for major companies. In a similar survey that Cyveillance conducted in 1998, fewer than 0.5 percent of personal Web pages contained Web bugs.

"The increase was so large on personal pages we went back to check it, because we thought it must be a mistake," said Brian Murray, the author of the report. The privacy policy of Yahoo states that the company sometimes uses Web bugs, but does not say explicitly that it places them on personal pages of its users. The America Online privacy policy does not describe the use of Web bugs on personal pages.

Often invisible, Web bugs are generally innocuous: they are often used, for example, to count visitors to sites or to gather statistical information about Web sites without collecting any personal information about those visitors. Andrew Weinstein, a spokesman for America Online, said that its Web bugs collect no personally identifiable information on the visitors to personal pages, and had a single purpose: "to send checks to people" whose Web pages attract new customers to the company.

But privacy advocates find the potential of such bugs alarming. Scott Charney, an Internet privacy and security expert at PricewaterhouseCoopers, said that he had seen an early draft of the Cyveillance survey, and that if Web bugs were in fact being used without consumers' knowledge to gather information, "it's extremely troubling the technology should not be used to collect information in such a covert way."

The use of bugs to track people and to create profiles of them becomes more powerful and, some privacy advocates argue, more problematic when the technology is used by a network of sites linked to some third party.

The bugs are often placed on pages by third parties, like online advertising agencies, to collect data about visitors to pages of the agencies' clients and to help the advertising company to determine which banner ads the visitors should see.

By sharing information among Web bugs across several different sites, the bug can also be used to track people's movements as they wander across the Internet. And if the visitor has given personal information to one site, say by registering for contests or signing a visitor's log, then the information can be linked to his or her activities on any other site with a Web bug issued by the same third party.

Cyveillance, which is based in Arlington, Va., conducted the survey, which included a million Web pages, to determine how prevalent these bugs have become; since the company works with clients to safeguard their reputations in the online world, Cyveillance executives said, the survey was intended to warn companies about the growing controversy surrounding the bugs. The Cyveillance report did not identify companies that place Web bugs.

The Web site for Be Free, the company that gets a great deal of the America Online traffic, says it "sits uniquely in the middle of a valuable data stream between businesses, their online marketing partners and consumers." The company is based in Marlborough, Mass.

Tom Gerace, the company's co- founder, said the company did not collect any information that could be used to identify consumers personally. He said that he created Be Free with his brother in 1996 to provide "flexible, robust marketing analysis so our customers and their affiliates can become better marketers over time."

The monitoring technology, which he says he prefers to refer to as Web beacons, helps track billions of advertising promotions each month for companies like America Online, Microsoft and Barnesandnoble.com.

Court: Posters' IDs Can Stay Under Wraps

In a decision hailed as a victory for anonymous speech, a California judge rules that Yahoo won't be compelled to reveal the identities of people who posted critical remarks online.

In another victory for online anonymity, a California judge has ruled that Yahoo does not need to reveal the identities of some message board posters.

In a ruling Friday, Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge Neil Cabrinha

said online critics who posted messages about Oklahoma-based legal company Pre-Paid Legal Services can keep their names under wraps.

Pre-Paid said it needed to know the identities of the posters to determine whether they had revealed company trade secrets. However, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, which represented the posters, argued they were merely exercising their First Amendment right to criticize the company, and Pre-Paid was trying to silence its detractors by bullying them. According to the EFF, Cabrinha ruled from the bench during a hearing Friday to quash a subpoena requiring Yahoo to turn over the names.

"This is a great victory for anonymous speech," EFF attorney Lee Tien said in a statement. "I believe Judge Cabrinha's ruling will signal to other companies that judges will not permit corporate executives to abuse the courts in ferreting out their critics."

Pre-Paid did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

As people increasingly turn to message boards to criticize companies, lawsuits that seek to unmask posters are becoming popular. Although several judges have ordered message board companies to reveal the names of those who visit their sites, other rulings have favored anonymity.

In April, a U.S. district judge in Washington state refused to order Web service InfoSpace to reveal the names of nearly a dozen anonymous posters. And in New Jersey, a state appellate court ruled last month that online posters can keep their identities secret in most cases.

However, such rulings aren't stopping people and companies from filing similar suits. Just last week, two council members in Emerson, New Jersey, sued a message board operator and some online posters for allegedly posting defamatory statements.

Supporters of online anonymity are cheering the ruling in the Pre-Paid case, saying it could eventually outline how anonymous critics are treated in the state of California, which is home to several companies that run message boards, including Yahoo.

Software Replaces Banner Ads On Popular Sites

Already contending with a weak advertising market, Web publishers have another concern: Gator.

The software company, known for hawking pop-up ads that let companies advertise on rival sites, is working a new variation on the theme--selling ads designed to block banners on sites such as Yahoo with pop-ups of the exact same size and dimension, completely obscuring the original ad. The pop-ups hover over the banners even when the Web visitor scrolls down the page, making it even more difficult to discern that the visible ad is a substitute.

"It's like getting Time magazine in the mailbox and somebody has pulled it out and pasted their own ad over the ones inside," said John Keck, media director for Foote Cone & Belding's interactive division.

The technique is the latest in an arsenal of guerrilla marketing tactics being pushed by developers of some free Web downloads, which include Gator

and some popular peer-to-peer file-swapping companies. Such applications, which are increasingly bundled with software code known as plug-ins, help advertisers place highly targeted messages on Web surfers' computer screens.

The latest trick pits advertiser against advertiser on its own war-torn battlefield: the banner. It could also cause additional concern for executives at Web sites suffering from a severe downturn in ad revenue.

One of the Web's first and most popular ad formats, banners were designed to offer an unobtrusive link that interested readers could click on to get more information about a product or service, usually on the advertiser's own Web site. But they have been criticized lately because the vast majority of surfers do not click on them. As a result, publishers have turned to bigger and more invasive formats such as pop-ups to squeeze more responses from visitors--and persuade reluctant marketers to once again advertise on the Web.

Gator, among others, is aggressively courting consumers and advertisers. The company gives away an online helper application that manages passwords and user IDs and has millions of active users. While Gator is free, the company that developed it sells keywords to marketers that lets them launch pop-ups at opportune moments. For example, a shopper visiting Staples.com might receive a promotion for rival Office Depot while surfing the site.

Now the company is selling "pop-up banners," delivered to fit exactly over existing banner space on any site.

Is it legal? While Gator executives say the practice is a service for consumers and fully disclosed when they install the software, legal experts say that because Gator is profiting from the sale of advertising that feeds off another Web site's advertising, it could be in a sticky legal situation.

The company is "preventing you from seeing the critical ad space that the site relies on for advertising--this is an act of unfair competition," said Michael Overing, an attorney and adjunct faculty at USC's Annenberg School of Communication.

"It's like you're driving down (the highway), and you're wearing special sunglasses, and you look at a billboard advertising Coca-Cola--but through the sunglasses it says 'Drink 7-Up.' Is that an act of unfair competition?

"I think it depends upon on what the consumer understood when they received the sunglasses. Or in the case of a pop-up ad that covers another ad, did the consumer understand this was going to occur when they downloaded the program. If the consumer understood and consented there may not be a claim," Overing said.

"This is the kind of stuff that gets to the nitty-gritty of what the Web can and can't do," he added.

Similar issues arose with a news publisher TotalNews, which framed the content of other Web publishers in order to retain readers and sell advertising within the frames. After several publishers took the company to court, it settled the case by giving consumers the right to prevent the frames.

Industry experts say that what Gator is doing is even more egregious

because it in effect is tampering with a Web site’s source of revenue.

"I can’t see anyone sitting around and saying that’s OK," Paul Grabowicz, new media program director at the U.C. Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism.

"It’s pretty clear that in the name of the consumers they are now hijacking the advertising of a Web site. Obviously somebody is going to strenuously object to that and probably in court."

In addition, the strategy could threaten an already hobbled Web advertising market.

"I would have some real problems" with an advertiser intruding on inventory sold to Sony, said Bob Gruters, director of media at Sony. "These types of pop-up units don’t engage anybody; don’t bring the consumer into my family, they’re extremely intrusive and are...counterproductive to what we would do."

Gruters said that because banners are becoming "like wallpaper." Sony looks to tap opportunities where it can create a relationship with the consumer. "I would be very upset if I know a competitor could come into an area that I were branding," he said. "It’s like you and I having a dialogue and the operator cuts in on the line."

According to Scott Eagle, chief marketing officer for Gator, the company’s tactics are justified because consumers invite the company to serve pop-ups when they install its software. In addition, he said advertisers are gravitating toward it because the results are much better than traditional banners.

Because Gator can monitor a person’s surfing habits across the Web, the technology can learn a person’s tastes and deliver related advertising on any site, rather than serve ads based on general site demographics.

For example, if a Gator user visited the Volkswagen Web site in the past day, the service might show him a banner ad for car insurance while surfing on the ESPN Web site. Gator’s banner would appear over the banner space on ESPN’s site "two seconds after the page loaded," Eagle said.

Consumers can move the banners to view the original site’s ads or click on a tiny X to close it.

"The technology is not targeting a given site. It’s targeting sites that do have banner ads," he said.

"We have much greater insight into what consumers do across the Web (than Yahoo and others). Yahoo has no visibility and Gator does," Eagle said.

Despite such claims, many media executives say they have mixed feelings about the benefits and potential minefields inherent in such marketing. Some say they are familiar with other companies attempting to cannabilize banner space from others, but many say they would be reluctant to do so.

"Not only do I have to consider the ramifications from the legal perspective for my clients but I also have to pay attention to my relationships with the publisher of the site," said Adam Gerber, media director for the DigitalEdge.

"If I’m known as an agency that ambushes Web publishers’ pre-existing

advertising, it could put the relationships we have with mainstream publishers at risk and that could be a detriment to my clients."

Others are stuck on the ethical problems of such advertising.

"People like me buy Yahoo thinking that when that page is loaded, people have seen my ad," said Charles Pinkerton, senior vice president of interactive marketing and media for Martin Interactive, which plans and places advertising for such clients as UPS, Olympus and Coca-Cola.

"At a minimum, it’s a bit of an ethical problem."

Nevertheless, many companies are seeking to attract advertisers with tools that insert ads into Web pages without the consent of Web publishers.

The maker of TopText, an application bundled with popular file-sharing programs such as iMesh and Bearshare, sells advertising that links to text on Web pages across the Internet. San Francisco-based eZula sells the rights to more than 7,000 keywords, such as real estate and travel, and then links those words to an advertiser’s site on any Web page that the consumer visits.

Microsoft has developed similar technology, called Smart Tags, which link keywords to pages of Microsoft’s choice. The software giant had plans to include the tags in the browser that will be bundled with the upcoming release of Windows XP, but reversed course after facing a wave of criticism.

Companies such as Gator say that because consumers agree to install the software on their computers, it’s perfectly legal to deliver advertising superimposed on other Web sites.

However, some consumers have complained about software such as Gator because it often comes installed with little notification. For example, plug-ins that piggyback on downloads may bury such disclosures deep within dense licensing agreements.

Yahoo representatives declined to comment on Gator-s ability to block ads on its network of sites, which consistently ranks as the Web’s most popular destination.

Gator software has also been criticized because it can be difficult to uninstall. For example, when consumers want to remove Gator from their computers they must uninstall two programs: Gator and Offer Companion, the program that controls the advertisements.

Some media executives say they are concerned that such tactics will undermine efforts in the industry to focus on online advertising’s positives.

"Is that a good thing? Somehow I’m not so sure. It’s clever, if it gets a response. But is that what we should be doing as an industry?" Keck said.

For his part, Gator’s Eagle said he believes the service fills a gap in online advertising that has proved frustrating for both advertisers and consumers.

Marketers are already feeling cheated by banner advertising because it doesn’t deliver qualified results, he said, while consumers are hit with ads that do not interest them. His company’s technology seeks to improve

those results by targeting consumers with ads for products that are more likely to get a particular individual to respond.

"Advertisers feel that they’re getting gypped by a 0.2 percent success rate for banners anyway," said Eagle, adding that "the amount of pop-up banners were doing juxtaposed to the gazillions of banners on the Web is a tiny fraction."

House Panel Passes Web-Tax Ban, Avoids Sales Tax

A House of Representatives panel voted Thursday to bar states from taxing Internet access and extend for five years a ban on other Internet-specific taxes, declining to approve legislation that would help states tax online commerce.

Democrats on the subcommittee and other supporters of the sales tax effort who had hoped to tie the two issues together said they would try again when the full committee takes up the matter in the fall.

As the clock runs out on a temporary ban on Internet access taxes and other Internet-specific taxes, state and local governments have sought congressional support for an initiative that would allow them to tax online sales.

But the House Judiciary subcommittee on commercial and administrative law opted not to consider the two issues together when it approved the moratorium extension.

The bill, as approved by the panel, would permanently ban taxes on Internet access, and extend for five years the current ban on "multiple and discriminatory" taxes on E-commerce.

An amendment that would have included support for the sales-tax effort was defeated when subcommittee chairman Bob Barr ruled it was not relevant to the bill being considered.

Barr, a Georgia Republican, said his priority was to renew the extension before it expired in October.

‘‘I think that any effort to encumber a clean moratorium right now would slow it down and possibly kill it and I think that would be irresponsible," Barr told reporters after the session.

North Carolina Rep. Mel Watt, the committee’s top Democrat, said he would reintroduce his sales-tax amendment when the full Judiciary Committee takes up the bill after the August break.

Watt and other supporters of the sales-tax effort said they would likely find more allies on the full Judiciary committee.

"This is a minor-league trial period. We get to go to the major leagues next," Watt said.

Under a 1992 Supreme Court decision, states cannot require out-of-state retailers such as catalog companies to collect sales taxes unless they have a physical presence in the state.

Many state and local officials fear a loss of revenues as constituents increasingly shop online, while Internet retailers say it would be impossible to comply with the maze of state and local tax codes across the United States.

A coalition of states is in the process of simplifying their tax codes with the hope that Congress would then allow them to collect sales taxes on remote sellers.

Several bills introduced in Congress would give states the green light to collect sales taxes once enough of them sign up.

But the details of such a plan have proven difficult to sort out. In the Senate, sponsors of rival bills have failed to come up with a compromise after months of negotiations.

Barr pointed to the slow pace of the Senate negotiations as a reason why he wanted to keep it separate from the moratorium. The sales-tax issue could be considered on its own merits, he said.

"There's nothing at all stopping us from moving forward with consideration of other legislation, it just doesn't have to be tied to this legislation," Barr said.

The Direct Marketing Association released a statement applauding the moratorium's passage.

"This rightly creates two distinct legislative agendas that are not held hostage to one another," said DMA president H. Robert Wientzen.

Lisa Cowell, executive director of the E-Fairness Coalition, a retail group that supports the states' effort, said she was not disappointed that the subcommittee did not approve sales-tax language.

"This was barely a skirmish in the fight. Everything went as we expected it to go," Cowell said.

Dot-Info Domain Manager Will Boot Cybersquatters

The company in charge of the new ".info" Internet domain says that it will seek to recover Internet addresses from dishonest applicants who grabbed hundreds of desirable names before they were made available to the public.

But Afilias, a consortium of 18 domain-name companies, said on Tuesday it would not take action until December, after trademark holders have first had a chance to win domain names from cybersquatters who used fraudulent applications.

The Newtown, Pennsylvania, firm's decision came after a week of criticism from Internet users who fear they may not have a chance to control addresses like ''www.computer.info" and "www.bank.info" after trademark holders -- both real and fraudulent -- get first crack during a month-long preregistration period. The general public will be able to sign up for ''.info" addresses on September 12.

The ''.info" domain is one of seven selected last November by the Internet

Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to introduce as an alternative to the established domains like ‘‘.com."

Afilias began taking applications from trademark holders on July 27, and made its database available for public scrutiny early last week.

Internet users quickly noted that many addresses, such as "www.sports.info" and ‘‘www.finance.info," had been snapped up by registrants who did not hold legitimate trademarks, and demanded that Afilias fix the problem.

Afilias chief marketing officer Roland LaPlante said Tuesday that trademark fraud has been an issue, and that the company planned to tackle the problem in December.

‘‘We have had some registrations that look like people have tried to circumvent eligibility requirements and sneak in under the wire," LaPlante told Reuters.

The ‘‘.info" domain is not the only one to run into difficulties. On Tuesday, NeuLevel Inc., which is overseeing the roll-out of the ‘‘.biz" domain, filed a lawsuit to defend against charges that its process is in effect an illegal lottery that violates trademark law.

Under Afilias’ existing rules, anyone may challenge a domain-name holder he believes to be fraudulent. After both parties put up fees totaling $295 each, the dispute is taken to the World Intellectual Property Organization, known as WIPO.

If the challenger wins, it gets all but $75 of its fees refunded and, if it holds the trademark, the rights to the domain name. A defender who wins retains the rights to the domain and gets all of its fees returned.

The system provides little incentive for challengers who do not own a trademark on the disputed name, as it cannot win the right to the name.

Afilias will wait to step in until the established challenge period ends on December 26, with the hopes that trademark holders will weed out many of the offenders.

At that point, Afilias will comb its database and bring all applications it suspects to be fraudulent before WIPO in one large batch.

LaPlante said he expected that many of those challenged would put up little resistance.

But that presents Afilias with another problem: how to make the recovered addresses available to the public again in the face of pent-up demand. LaPlante said the company could release them on a random basis or in one large batch, but had not decided yet.

‘‘We have a little time to think this through ... we don’t actually know how we’re going to it," he said.

The move disappointed at least one Internet user who said he has spent ‘‘a lot" of money hoping to reserve .info addresses.

‘‘They’ve done such a great job so far, I’m not really sure why I’d want them doing that for me in December," said Tucson, Arizona lawyer Gary Korn, his voice dripping with sarcasm.

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